

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-22 (Canceled).

23. (Currently amended) A method of manufacturing a stent delivery system, said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing an inner catheter;
- (b) compressing a self-expandable stent over said inner catheter;
- (c) while said self-expandable stent is in a compressed state, positioning a braided tube around said inner catheter and said self-expandable stent, said braided tube, when thus positioned around said inner catheter and said self-expandable stent, being adapted for axial movement relative to said self-expandable stent and being dimensioned to maintain said self-expandable stent in said compressed state; and
- (d) positioning an outer catheter around said braided tube, said outer catheter being adapted for axial movement relative to said inner catheter.

24. (Previously presented) A method of manufacturing a stent delivery system, said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing an inner catheter;
- (b) compressing a self-expandable stent over said inner catheter;
- (c) while said self-expandable stent is in a compressed state, positioning a braided tube around said inner catheter and said self-expandable stent, said braided tube being dimensioned to maintain said self-expandable stent in said compressed state; and

(d) positioning an outer catheter around said braided tube, said outer catheter being adapted for axial movement relative to said inner catheter, wherein said braided tube positioning step comprises forming a braided tube over said self-expandable stent and said inner catheter.

25. (Original) The method as claimed in claim 24 further comprising mechanically coupling said outer catheter to said braided tube for axial movement.

26. (Original) The method as claimed in claim 25 wherein said inner catheter and said self-expandable stent are coaxially disposed, wherein said self-expandable stent is flexible in both the longitudinal and radial axes and wherein said compressing step comprises stretching said self-expandable stent longitudinally.

27. (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 26 wherein said outer catheter is a solid tube, said outer catheter positioning step comprising sliding said outer catheter over said braided tube.

28. (Original) The method as claimed in claim 26 wherein said outer catheter is provided with a longitudinal slit extending at least a part of the length thereof, said method further comprising, after said outer catheter positioning step, the step of sealing said longitudinal slit.

29. (Original) The method as claimed in claim 23 wherein said braided tube positioning step comprises sliding a pre-formed braided tube over said inner catheter and said self-expandable stent.

30. (Previously presented) A method of manufacturing a stent delivery system, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) providing an inner catheter;

(b) compressing a self-expandable stent over said inner catheter;

(c) while said self-expandable stent is in a compressed state, positioning a braided tube around said inner catheter and said self-expandable stent, said braided tube being dimensioned to maintain said self-expandable stent in said compressed state;

(d) positioning an outer catheter around said braided tube, said outer catheter being adapted for axial movement relative to said inner catheter, wherein said braided tube positioning step comprises sliding a pre-formed braided tube over said inner catheter and said self-expandable stent; and

(e) mechanically coupling said outer catheter to said braided tube for axial movement.

31. (Original) The method as claimed in claim 30 wherein said inner catheter and said self-expandable stent are coaxially disposed, wherein said self-expandable stent is flexible in both the longitudinal and radial axes and wherein said compressing step comprises stretching said self-expandable stent longitudinally.

32. (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 31 wherein said outer catheter is a solid tube.

33. (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 32 further comprising, before said outer catheter positioning step, the steps of fixing a braid holding sleeve to said inner catheter and securing the proximal end of said braided tube to said braid holding sleeve.

34. (Original) The method as claimed in claim 31 further comprising, before said compressing step, the step of fixing a stent engaging sleeve to said inner catheter, said self-expandable stent surrounding said stent engaging sleeve, said stent engaging sleeve having an outer surface adapted to engage said self-expandable stent in such a way as to deter said self-expandable stent from sliding proximally relative thereto.

35. (Withdrawn) A method of manufacturing a stent delivery system, said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing an inner catheter;
- (b) compressing a self-expandable stent over said inner catheter;
- (c) while said self-expandable stent is in a compressed state, wrapping a helical restraint around said inner catheter and said self-expandable stent, said helical restraint being dimensioned to maintain said self-expandable stent in said compressed state; and
- (d) positioning an outer catheter around said helical restraint, said outer catheter being adapted for axial movement relative to said inner catheter.

36. (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 35 wherein said helical restraint is made from a strong, flexible filamentary or ribbon-like material having a low coefficient of friction.

37. (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 36 further comprising the step of mechanically coupling said outer catheter to said helical restraint for axial movement.

38. (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 37 wherein said inner catheter and said self-expandable stent are coaxially disposed, wherein said self-expandable stent is flexible in both the longitudinal and radial axes and wherein said compressing step comprises stretching said self-expandable stent longitudinally.

39. (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 38 wherein said outer catheter is provided with a longitudinal slit extending at least a part of the length thereof, said method further comprising, after said outer catheter positioning step, the step of sealing said longitudinal slit.

40. (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 39 further comprising, before said compressing step, the step of fixing a stent engaging sleeve to said inner catheter, said self-

expandable stent surrounding said stent engaging sleeve, said stent engaging sleeve having an outer surface adapted to engage said self-expandable stent in such a way as to deter said self-expandable stent from sliding proximally relative thereto.

41. (Withdrawn) A method of manufacturing a stent delivery system, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) providing an inner catheter;

(b) compressing a self-expandable stent over said inner catheter, said self-expandable stent being flexible in both the radial and longitudinal axes; and

(c) positioning an outer catheter around said self-expandable stent, said outer catheter being adapted for axial movement relative to said inner catheter and being dimensioned to maintain said self-expandable stent in a compressed state, said outer catheter being provided with a longitudinal slit extending at least a part of the length thereof; and

(d) after said outer catheter positioning step, sealing said longitudinal slit.

42. (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 41 wherein said self-expandable stent is a knitted mesh of nitinol wire.

43. (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 41 wherein said outer catheter is provided with a longitudinal slit extending at least a part of the length thereof, said method further comprising, after said outer catheter positioning step, the step of sealing said longitudinal slit.

44. (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 43 further comprising, before said compressing step, the step of fixing a stent engaging sleeve to said inner catheter, said self-expandable stent surrounding said stent engaging sleeve, said stent engaging sleeve having an outer

surface adapted to engage said self-expandable stent in such a way as to deter said self-expandable stent from sliding proximally relative thereto.